

Date: 13 May 2024
Our ref: 473732
Your ref: EN070008



The Planning Inspectorate
National Infrastructure Directorate
Temple Quay House
Temple Quay
Bristol BS1 6PN

Hornbeam House
Crewe Business Park
Electra Way
Crewe
Cheshire
CW1 6GJ

BY EMAIL ONLY

T 0300 060 3900

Dear David Wallace

NSIP Reference: EN070008 – Viking CCS Pipeline
Consultation: Examining Authorities First Written Questions – Additional Response

Natural England is a non-departmental public body. Our statutory purpose is to ensure that the natural environment is conserved, enhanced, and managed for the benefit of present and future generations, thereby contributing to sustainable development.

Please find Natural England's response to question 1.12.15 of the Examining Authorities first written questions at **Annex A** below.

For any further advice on this consultation please contact the case officer Robbie Clarey and copy to consultations@naturalengland.org.uk.

Yours sincerely

Robbie Clarey
Planning & Environment Senior Adviser

Annex A

Question Reference	Question addressed to	Question	Natural England response
1.12.15	Applicant, Natural England	<p>Marine Environment</p> <p>NE recommends the terrestrial and marine aspects are considered at a holistic level because the Proposed Development is intrinsically linked to an offshore project [RR-073]. 1) What implications does / would this have on the HRA carried out to date? 2) How should the competent authority approach or consider such matters when undertaking the Appropriate Assessment?</p>	<p>Natural England recognises that it is unlikely that all the necessary information and/or data on the marine elements will be available within the examination timeframes to inform the HRA. Whilst it is the responsibility of the competent Authority to determine how best to proceed with the HRA, within our Relevant Rep advice [Annex B REP-073] we advised that there may be an acceptable (to the Secretary of State) alternative approach to completing a Holistic HRA when all the relevant marine information is available. However, this would require a planning condition restricting the commencement of the terrestrial elements, until such time that the holistic HRA had been completed and the marine elements have been consented on the basis that AEoI could be excluded for the whole project or suitably compensated for. If this approach was to be adopted then, NE advises that the HRA for this consent should consider the impacts of the terrestrial element alone, then consider the impacts in-combination/cumulatively with the marine element and other plans and projects based on best available evidence at that time.</p>